



April 20, 2017

Dear Friends Gathering to Discern:

I am sending this letter in response to the request for a minute from our meeting. West Hills Friends meeting does not have a formal minute to share so I am writing based on my sense of where it feels like the meeting is at this time.

First, it is important to state that there is strong desire to remain in relationship with all our friends who have historically been part of NWYM. Our love and affection for these individuals and churches is part of what kept WHF from leaving the Yearly meeting voluntarily even when remaining was painful.

There is interest by some WHF members in examining what it would look like and what mutual benefits could come from formally associating with other Quaker meetings. This could include those who have been removed from NWYM or others wanting similar goals from such an affiliation. We have not yet formally discussed the path our meeting is called to at this time. I personally believe that as the destination and shape of a potential new path further unfolds, it will be easier for the meeting to determine if this is the right path for us. Based on our history of discernment, I am confident WHF will take the time needed for a full discernment process, letting God's creative work unfold at the right pace, and not feeling constrained by external timelines.

We have not discussed specific preferences, but here are things I believe we would expect for any new yearly meeting or affiliation:

- It is of utmost importance that any and all members of WHF are allowed to fully participate and provide leadership in any affiliation level meetings, committees, etc.
- We have amazing released Pastors who have many gifts. We would want to collaborate only with others who value and appreciate these individuals as much as we do.
- It is a priority for relationships to be respectful and communication transparent.
- It is important that diversity is respected and people are safe from the judgment of others.
- There would need to be a commitment to follow Quaker process and decision making.
- It seems we may not want to participate in an arrangement where an individual or committee has authority to tell our local meeting what we should or should not do, but WHF's has not discussed this topic.

Hopefully, this information will be useful to you as you collectively listen for God's leading about a new "Thing". You will be in my prayers as you enjoy worshipping together.

Doreen Crail,
West Hills Friends Presiding Clerk